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12 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
13 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
14 SOUTHERN DIVISION

15 CHARLOTTE ERNSTING, an } Case No. 8:15-cv-1682-JVS-KES
16 individual, }
17 Plaintiff, }
18 vs. }
19 PACIFIC BELL TELEPHONE }
COMPANY, a California corporation, }
20 dba AT&T California, HELMSMAN }
MANAGEMENT SERVICES, LLC; }
AT&T INC.; FMR LLC; SEDGWICK }
21 CLAIMS MANAGEMENT }
SERVICES, INC.; AON HEWITT }
22 BENEFIT PAYMENT SERVICES }
LLC; and DOES 1 through 11, }
inclusive, }
23 Defendants. }
24 }
25 }
26 }
27 }
28 }

**DEFENDANTS PACIFIC
BELL TELEPHONE
COMPANY, FMR LLC,
SEDGWICK CLAIMS
MANAGEMENT SERVICES,
INC., AND AON HEWITT
BENEFIT PAYMENT
SERVICES' MEMORANDUM
OF POINTS AND
AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT
OF MOTION TO DISMISS
[Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(6)] OR TO
STRIKE [Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(f)]
AND FOR MORE DEFINITE
STATEMENT [Fed. R. Civ. P.
12(e)];**

Date: December 7, 2015
Time: 1:30 P.M.
Courtroom: 10C
Judge: Hon. James V. Selna

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	1
II.	Procedural History.....	2
III.	Facts Alleged in the Complaint.....	2
IV.	Argument.....	3
A.	Standard of Review.....	3
B.	Plaintiff's Causes of Action Fail to State a Claim Because They Are Preempted.....	5
1.	Plaintiff's state-law claims based on the denial of disability payments, pension payments and medical and prescription costs, or interference with such benefits, are preempted by ERISA.....	5
2.	Workers' compensation is the exclusive remedy for alleged denial or interference with Plaintiff's workers' compensation benefits.	7
B.	Plaintiff's Claims Should Be Dismissed Because They Are Based on Alleged Testimony in a Judicial Proceeding.	8
C.	Plaintiff's Conclusory Allegations Fail to State a Claim Under Applicable Pleading Standards.	10
D.	Plaintiff's Complaint is Inherently Vague and Ambiguous.	12
V.	Conclusion.....	13

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

Cases

3	<i>Ashcroft v. Iqbal</i> ,	
4	556 U.S. 662 (2009)	4, 10, 11
5	<i>Balistreri v. Pacifica Police Dep't</i> ,	
6	901 F.2d 696 (9th Cir. 1990)	4
7	<i>Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly</i> ,	
8	550 U.S. 544 (2007)	4, 10
9	<i>Castaneda v. Saxon Mortgage Services, Inc.</i> ,	
10	2009 WL 4640673 (E.D. Cal., Dec.3, 2009)	11
11	<i>Cochran v. Cochran</i> ,	
12	65 Cal. App. 4th 488 (1998)	11, 12
13	<i>Harris v. King</i> ,	
14	60 Cal. App. 4th 1185 (1998)	9
15	<i>Jenkins v. MCI Telecom. Corp.</i> ,	
16	973 F. Supp. 1133 (C.D. Cal. 1997)	8
17	<i>Johnson v. District 2 Marine Engineers Beneficial Ass'n-Associated</i>	
18	<i>Maritime Officers, Medical Plan</i> ,	
19	857 F.2d 514	6
20	<i>KOVR-TV, Inc. v. Superior Court</i> ,	
21	31 Cal. App. 4th 1023 (1995)	11
22	<i>Lazar v. Superior Court</i> ,	
23	12 Cal. 4th 631 (1996)	11
24	<i>Lea v. Republic Airlines, Inc.</i> ,	
25	903 F.2d 624 (9th Cir. 1990)	5
26	<i>Marsh & McLennan, Inc. v. Superior Court</i> ,	
27	49 Cal. 3d 1 (1989)	7
28	<i>Metro. Life Ins. Co. v. Taylor</i> ,	
29	481 U.S. 58 (1987)	5

1	<i>Moss v. U.S. Secret Serv.</i> ,	
2	572 F.3d 962 (9th Cir.2009).....	4
3	<i>Olson v. General Dynamics Corp.</i> ,	
4	960 F.2d 1418 (9th Cir. 1991).....	6
5	<i>Pilot Life Ins. Co. v. Dedeaux</i> ,	
6	481 U.S. 41 (1987)	6
7	<i>Ramirez v. Alameda</i> ,	
8	No. C12-4852 MEJ, 2013 WL 5934700 (N.D. Cal. Oct. 31, 2013)	12
9	<i>Rubin v. Green</i> ,	
10	4 Cal. 4th 1187 (1993).....	9
11	<i>Shaw v. Delta Air Lines, Inc.</i> ,	
12	463 U.S. 85 (1983)	5
13	<i>St. Paul Mercury Ins. Co. v. Tessera, Inc.</i> ,	
14	908 F. Supp. 2d 1054 (N.D. Cal. 2012).....	9
15	<i>Vacanti v. State Comp. Ins. Fund</i> ,	
16	24 Cal. 4th 800 (2001).....	7, 8
17	<i>Vess v. Ciba–Geigy Corps. USA</i> ,	
18	317 F.3d 1097 (9th Cir. 2003).....	10
19	<i>Wavetronix LLC v. Swenson</i> ,	
20	No. 4:12-CV-00244-BLW, 2013 WL 1222565	
21	(D. Idaho Mar. 25, 2013).....	4
22	<i>Whittlestone, Inc. v. Handi-Craft Co.</i> ,	
23	618 F.3d 970 (9th Cir. 2010)	5
24	<i>Wise v. Verizon Commc'ns, Inc.</i> ,	
25	600 F.3d 1180 (9th Cir. 2010)	6
26		
27		
28		

1	Statutes
2	California Civil Code
3	Section 47(b)(2).....8
4	California Labor Code
5	Sections 3600(a) and 3602(a).....1, 7
6	United States Code
7	Title 29, Section 1001, <i>et seq.</i> passim

8	Other Authorities
9	Federal Rules of Civil Procedure
10	Rule 10.....12
11	Rule 12(b)(6)1, 3
12	Rule 12(e)1, 4
13	Rule 12(f).....1, 4, 13
14	Rule 8.....10
15	Rule 9(b)1, 10

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MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES

2 I. Introduction.

3 Defendants Pacific Bell Telephone Company, FMR LLC, Sedgwick
4 Claims Management Services, Inc., and Hewitt Associates LLC, incorrectly
5 named as AON Hewitt Benefit Payment Services (collectively the “Non-
6 Helmsman Defendants”), bring this motion to dismiss or to strike, or in the
7 alternative move for a more definite statement.

8 This action arises from the alleged failure to pay Plaintiff disability
9 payments, medical and prescription costs, pension payments, and workers'
10 compensation benefits, and are based on alleged statements and filings
11 allegedly made in judicial and quasi-judicial proceedings which Plaintiff
12 alleges have damaged her. Plaintiff's claims are preempted under state and
13 federal law. Even if not preempted, Plaintiff's causes of action fail to state a
14 claim and the complaint should be dismissed.

15 Plaintiff's complaint must be dismissed for four reasons: First, although
16 styled as torts, Plaintiff's claims relate to the alleged failure to pay benefits
17 pursuant to plans governed exclusively under the Employee Retirement
18 Income Security Act of 1974 ("ERISA"), as amended, and ERISA preempts
19 any state-law claims for employee benefits. Second, similarly, Plaintiff's
20 claims for the alleged failure to pay workers' compensation benefits are barred
21 by the exclusive remedy provisions of the California Workers Compensation
22 Act. Third, to the extent that Plaintiff's claims are based on testimony and
23 acts connected to a judicial or quasi-judicial proceeding such as a workers'
24 compensation proceeding, these alleged acts cannot serve as a basis of liability
25 under California law. Finally, Plaintiff's claims are not pleaded with the
26 requisite specificity required under the *Twombly/Iqbal* standard and Federal
27 Rule of Civil Procedure 9(b).

1 When the allegations regarding non-payment of benefits, workers'
2 compensation, and allegations regarding statements made at hearings or to the
3 workers' compensation board are taken away, no facts exist to support
4 plaintiffs' tort claims, and they should be dismissed as to the Non-Helmsman
5 Defendants.¹

6 Plaintiff has also improperly pleaded claims as to multiple defendants
7 without separating out the allegations as to each named defendant as required.
8 Defendants respectfully request that if this motion to dismiss is not granted in
9 its entirety, this court grant its Motion for a More Definite Statement.

10 **II. Procedural History.**

11 This action was filed in Orange County Superior Court on September
12 18, 2015. On October 20, 2015, the Non-Helmsman Defendants timely filed a
13 Notice of Removal to this Court.² Dkt. 1. A copy of the Complaint is
14 attached hereto as Exhibit A.

15 **III. Facts Alleged in the Complaint.**

16 In 1997, Plaintiff was awarded a judgment against Pacific Bell. Compl.
17 ¶16. Following an Appeal, the trial court was directed to determine the
18 amount of any offset Pacific Bell might be entitled to for any stress-related
19 disability payments made under the Workers Compensation system. Compl. ¶
20 18. At a 2001 hearing, Defendant Helmsman allegedly testified that Plaintiff
21 would "receive full medical benefit coverage from Pacific Bell for the rest of
22 life and would never be forced to undergo additional independent medical
23 examination or otherwise have her case reevaluated." Compl. ¶ 21. Based on
24 "Defendants' representations" the court offset the damages portion of the

25 ¹ Helmsman Management Services, LLC is filing a separate motion to
26 dismiss.

27 ² AT&T Inc. is also a defendant in the above-captioned action. It has not
28 been served with the Complaint and has not appeared.

1 judgment on the basis of future payments. Compl. ¶ 22. Plaintiff further
2 alleges in conclusory fashion, that the representations allegedly “made to the
3 Superior court by the Defendants” were false and Defendants knew they were
4 false when made. Compl. ¶ 23.

5 Plaintiff then alleges that “defendants failed and continue to fail, to
6 make the promised disability payments, refused to pay medical and
7 prescription costs, failed to make pension payments, and sought termination of
8 [Plaintiff’s] Workman’s Compensation benefits.” Compl. ¶ 24. She further
9 alleges that “Defendants” “invaded her privacy by demanding medical records
10 from [Plaintiff’s] providers” (Compl. ¶26), terminated her medical coverage
11 without right or notice (Compl. ¶27), filed false documents with the Workers
12 Compensation Appeal Board (Comp. ¶ 28), artificially reduced Plaintiff’s start
13 dates to reduce her eligibility for benefits (Compl. ¶ 29), and made deductions
14 from Plaintiff’s benefits for the supposed reason of paying premiums for
15 medical insurance while at the same time instructing the medical provider that
16 Plaintiff was no longer covered (Compl. ¶ 30).

17 Based on the foregoing alleged failure by “Defendants” to provide
18 promised pension, disability, medical and workers’ compensation benefits
19 supposedly promised in court proceedings, and the alleged interference by
20 “Defendants” with those benefits, Plaintiff asserts seven tort causes of action
21 against all Defendants: intentional misrepresentation, negligent
22 misrepresentation, concealment, negligent non-disclosure by a fiduciary,
23 negligent infliction of emotional distress, intentional infliction of emotional
24 distress and negligence. Compl. ¶¶ 33-60.

25 **IV. Argument.**

26 **A. Standard of Review.**

27 The Non-Helmsman Defendants seek dismissal of the claims against
28 them pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6). Rule 12(b)(6)

1 permits dismissal for “failure to state a claim upon which relief can be
 2 granted,” and is appropriate where the complaint lacks a cognizable legal
 3 theory or sufficient facts to support a cognizable legal theory. *See Balistreri v.*
 4 *Pacifica Police Dep’t*, 901 F.2d 696, 699 (9th Cir. 1990).

5 A complaint may survive a motion to dismiss only if, taking all well-
 6 pleaded factual allegations as true, it contains enough facts to “state a claim to
 7 relief that is plausible on its face.” *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
 8 (quoting *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)). “A claim
 9 has facial plausibility when the plaintiff pleads factual content that allows the
 10 court to draw the reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the
 11 misconduct alleged.” *Id.* “Threadbare recitals of the elements of a cause of
 12 action, supported by mere conclusory statements, do not suffice.” *Id.* “In
 13 sum, for a complaint to survive a motion to dismiss, the non-conclusory
 14 factual content, and reasonable inferences from that content, must be plausibly
 15 suggestive of a claim entitling the plaintiff to relief.” *Moss v. U.S. Secret*
 16 *Serv.*, 572 F.3d 962, 969 (9th Cir. 2009) (quotations omitted).

17 When evaluating a Rule 12(e) motion, the court should look to whether
 18 the pleading is so vague or ambiguous that the party cannot reasonably prepare
 19 a response. “Rule 12(e) is focused on the pleading and not the merits of any
 20 claim; it only analyzes whether the plaintiff has met the minimal pleading
 21 standards so that a defendant may reasonably answer the complaint.”
 22 *Wavetronix LLC v. Swenson*, No. 4:12-CV-00244-BLW, 2013 WL 1222565,
 23 at *3 (D. Idaho Mar. 25, 2013).

24 Rule 12(f) provides that the “court may strike from a pleading . . . any
 25 redundant, immaterial, impertinent, or scandalous matter.” Fed. R. Civ. P.
 26 12(f). “The function of a 12(f) motion to strike is to avoid the expenditure of
 27 time and money that must arise from litigating spurious issues by dispensing
 28

1 with those issues prior to trial.” *Whittlestone, Inc. v. Handi-Craft Co.*, 618
 2 F.3d 970, 973 (9th Cir. 2010) (quotations omitted).

3 **B. Plaintiff's Causes of Action Fail to State a Claim Because They Are**
 4 **Preempted.**

5 Plaintiff seeks tort relief for the failure to provide benefits and
 6 interference with benefits. Depending upon the benefit at issue, it is
 7 exclusively provided for by either ERISA or the California's workers'
 8 compensation statute. *See Compl.* ¶¶ 11-31. These alleged facts, even if taken
 9 as true, cannot serve as the basis of liability under California law.

10 1. Plaintiff's state-law claims based on the denial of disability
 11 payments, pension payments and medical and prescription costs,
 12 or interference with such benefits, are preempted by ERISA.

13 All of Plaintiff's claims are preempted by ERISA to the extent they
 14 relate to the nonpayment of benefits under a covered pension, medical, or
 15 disability plan. Section 514(a) of ERISA broadly preempts “any and all State
 16 laws insofar as they may now or hereafter relate to any employee benefit plan”
 17 covered by ERISA. 29 U.S.C. § 1144(a). This preemption has been broadly
 18 interpreted to encompass any and all state law claims with a “connection with
 19 or reference to” an employee benefit plan. *Shaw v. Delta Air Lines, Inc.*, 463
 20 U.S. 85, 97 (1983).

21 ERISA preemption covers not only laws that expressly concern
 22 employee benefits, but also those which amount to indirect regulation of
 23 employee benefit plans. *Id.* at 98. Thus, any state law claim which relates to a
 24 plan covered by ERISA is completely barred. *See Lea v. Republic Airlines,*
 25 *Inc.*, 903 F.2d 624, 631-33 (9th Cir. 1990). Case law leaves no doubt that
 26 courts may not entertain claims—no matter how denominated—for damages
 27 suffered because benefits were allegedly denied or delayed under a plan
 28 covered by ERISA. *See e.g., Metro. Life Ins. Co. v. Taylor*, 481 U.S. 58, 62-

1 63 (1987) (holding employee's common law contract and tortious wrongful
 2 termination claims were preempted by ERISA and subject to federal
 3 jurisdiction); *Pilot Life Ins. Co. v. Dedeaux*, 481 U.S. 41, 46 (1987) (stating
 4 preemption clause is "deliberately expansive, and designed to establish
 5 pension plan regulation as exclusively a federal concern"). "[W]here the
 6 existence of an ERISA plan is a critical factor in establishing liability under a
 7 state cause of action, the state law claim is preempted." *Wise v. Verizon*
 8 *Commc'ns, Inc.*, 600 F.3d 1180, 1190 (9th Cir. 2010) (citation omitted).
 9 Fraud claims are specifically included in this preemption, as are claims for
 10 emotional distress. *Olson v. General Dynamics Corp.*, 960 F.2d 1418, 1423
 11 (9th Cir. 1991) (affirming ruling that fraud claim "relating to" benefits plan is
 12 preempted by ERISA); *Johnson v. District 2 Marine Engineers Beneficial*
 13 *Ass'n-Associated Maritime Officers, Medical Plan*, 857 F.2d 514, 517 (9th
 14 Cir. 1988) (affirming dismissal of fraud and IIED claims as preempted by
 15 ERISA where they "clearly state common-law claims for enforcement of plan
 16 benefits").

17 Here, the private employer plans providing the benefits at issue are
 18 governed by ERISA as a matter of law. *See Pilot Life Ins. Co.*, 481 U.S. at 44
 19 ("ERISA comprehensively regulates, among other things, employee welfare
 20 benefit plans that, 'through the purchase of insurance or otherwise,' provide
 21 medical, surgical, or hospital care, or benefits in the event of sickness
 22 accident, disability, or death. § 3(1), 29 U.S.C. § 1002(1)."). Thus, the
 23 gravamen of all of Plaintiff's causes of action is the alleged nonpayment of
 24 pension, disability and medical benefits, which are all benefits under ERISA
 25 plans. *See* Complaint at ¶ 24. As such, all of her claims—regardless of
 26 whether they sound in tort—are preempted to the extent they constitute or
 27 relate to benefits provided by these plans, in this case, under AT&T Umbrella
 28 Benefit Plan No. 1 (for medical and prescription drugs) and AT&T Umbrella

1 Benefit Plan No. 3 (for disability payments). Because they are all completely
 2 preempted, each of Plaintiff's causes of action should be dismissed.

3 2. Workers' compensation is the exclusive remedy for alleged
 4 denial or interference with Plaintiff's workers' compensation
 5 benefits.

6 As with Plaintiff's claims regarding the payment of benefits pursuant to
 7 an ERISA plan, each of Plaintiff's claims regarding the failure to pay workers'
 8 compensation and alleged false representations to the workers' compensation
 9 appeals board are also preempted.

10 Under California law, workers' compensation provides the exclusive
 11 remedy for an injury sustained by an employee in the course of employment
 12 and compensable under the workers' compensation law. *See Cal. Lab. Code*
 13 §§ 3600(a), 3602(a). This "exclusivity rule" also encompasses injuries
 14 "collateral to or derivative of" an injury compensable under the workers'
 15 compensation law. *Vacanti v. State Comp. Ins. Fund*, 24 Cal. 4th 800, 813
 16 (2001). The exclusivity rule bars "claims based on 'disputes over the delay or
 17 discontinuance of [workers' compensation] benefits, including those claims
 18 seeking to recover economic or contractual damages from the mishandling of a
 19 workers' compensation claim." *Id.* at 815 (quoting *Marsh & McLennan, Inc.*
 20 *v. Superior Court*, 49 Cal. 3d 1, 7 (1989)).

21 Courts applying the exclusivity rule apply a two part test. First, the
 22 court must determine whether the alleged injury is "collateral to or derivative
 23 of" an injury compensable by the exclusive remedies of the Workers'
 24 Compensation Act. *Id.* at 811. Second, if the injury meets the "collateral to or
 25 derivative of" test, then courts examine whether the alleged acts or motives
 26 that establish the elements of the cause of action fall outside the risks
 27 encompassed within the compensation bargain. *Id.* 811-12. Where the acts
 28 are a "normal" part of the employment relationship or workers' compensation

1 claim process, or where the motive does not violate a fundamental public
 2 policy, then the cause of action is barred. *Id.* at 812.

3 Here, Plaintiff's claims are based on representations regarding future
 4 workers compensation payments allegedly made at a court hearing (Compl. ¶
 5 19) and allegedly false documents provided to the Workman's Compensation
 6 Board (Compl. ¶ 28). The alleged injuries therefore arise "in the course of the
 7 workers' compensation claims process." Moreover, the alleged acts,
 8 amounting to a dispute over the payment of workers' compensation benefits
 9 and submissions to the workers' compensation board are properly
 10 characterized as a "normal" part of the claims process. Plaintiffs' causes of
 11 action are therefore preempted to the extent based on allegations of
 12 nonpayment of workers' compensation or statements made in the claims
 13 process. *See Vaccanti*, 24 Cal. 4th at 821 ("Because denying or objecting to
 14 claims for benefits is also a normal part of the claims process, misconduct
 15 stemming from the delay or "discontinuance of payments ... is properly
 16 addressed by the WCAB."); *Jenkins v. MCI Telecom. Corp.*, 973 F. Supp.
 17 1133, 1138 & fn. 9 (C.D. Cal. 1997) (granting summary judgment on IIED
 18 and fraud claims because "California's worker's compensation liability
 19 provisions . . . exclusively govern claims for [IIED and fraud]" where related
 20 to claims process).

21 **B. Plaintiff's Claims Should Be Dismissed Because They Are Based on**
 22 **Alleged Testimony in a Judicial Proceeding.**

23 Plaintiff's complaint and every claim therein is based on privileged
 24 speech under California law, and therefore should be dismissed. California
 25 Civil Code section 47 states: "A privileged publication or broadcast is one
 26 made . . . in any . . . judicial proceeding . . ." Cal. Civ. Code § 47(b)(2).
 27 "The section provides an absolute privilege for a publication filed in a
 28 litigation proceeding" and "has been extended to *any* communication, whether

1 or not it is a publication, and to *all* torts other than malicious prosecution.” *St.*
 2 *Paul Mercury Ins. Co. v. Tessera, Inc.*, 908 F. Supp. 2d 1054, 1061 (N.D. Cal.
 3 2012) (quotations and citations omitted). The privilege has been given an
 4 “expansive reach” by California courts and encompasses all communications
 5 “with ‘some relation’” to judicial proceedings. *Rubin v. Green*, 4 Cal. 4th
 6 1187, 1193-94 (1993). This privilege extends to quasi-judicial proceedings
 7 such as workers’ compensation proceedings. *Harris v. King*, 60 Cal. App. 4th
 8 1185, 1187 (1998) (holding privilege extended to medical report submitted to
 9 State Compensation Insurance Fund “even if prepared and communicated
 10 maliciously and with knowledge of its falsity.”). The privilege affords
 11 **absolute** immunity against tort liability arising out of such a communication
 12 regardless of attempts by the “plaintiff” to “plead around” this “absolute
 13 barrier.” *See Rubin*, 4 Cal. 4th at 1201-02; *accord St. Paul Mercury Ins. Co.*,
 14 908 F. Supp. 2d at 1061 (granting motion to dismiss and stating “Section 47(b)
 15 does not function like an evidentiary privilege to the extent that it does not bar
 16 the introduction of evidence, but instead acts as a bar on liability for privileged
 17 statements.”).

18 Here, Plaintiff’s tort claims are based on arguments and testimony made
 19 in a California judicial proceeding (Compl. ¶¶ 19-25) and alleged statements
 20 in materials allegedly provided to the California Worker’s Compensation
 21 Board (Compl. ¶ 28). These alleged representations (and alleged failure to
 22 testify regarding unspecified “material facts”) form the factual basis of each of
 23 Plaintiff’s claims. Compl. ¶¶ 33-60. More specifically, the alleged testimony
 24 by “Helsman” (sic) as part of court hearing on the offset of damages, in which
 25 it purported stated that Plaintiff would receive “full medical benefit coverage
 26 from PACIFIC BELL for the rest of her life and would never be forced to
 27 undergo additional independent medical examination or otherwise have her
 28 case reevaluated” (Compl. ¶ 21) is the supposedly knowingly false

1 representation that is the basis for each of her misrepresentation, concealment
 2 and non-disclosure claims. This supposed misrepresentation followed by the
 3 alleged acts contrary to the supposed representation is the purported cause of
 4 “plaintiff’s alleged “severe emotional distress.” *See* Compl. ¶¶ 51, 55.
 5 Similarly, Plaintiff claims that the alleged filing of “false documents with the
 6 Workers’ Compensation Board” – which statements are again covered by the
 7 absolute privilege – caused emotional distress and was negligent. *See* Compl.
 8 ¶¶ 28, 45, 54, and 58. Without these alleged privileged statements, Plaintiff’s
 9 claims fail and, therefore, should be dismissed.

10 **C. Plaintiff’s Conclusory Allegations Fail to State a Claim Under**
 11 **Applicable Pleading Standards.**

12 In addition to being preempted, each of Plaintiff’s causes of action fails
 13 to state a claim because each amounts to only a “formulaic recitation of the
 14 elements of a cause of action.” *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 555-56. Plaintiff has
 15 not “ple[d] factual content that allows the court to draw the reasonable
 16 inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged.” *Iqbal*, 556
 17 U.S. at 678. Instead, each of Plaintiff’s causes of action merely state the
 18 elements of each claim and assert them against “all defendants” (Compl. ¶¶
 19 32-60). These threadbare “legal conclusion[s]” are not entitled to the
 20 assumption of truth. *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 555; *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 678 (stating
 21 Rule 8 “demands more than an unadorned, the-defendant-unlawfully-harmed-
 22 me accusation”). Because Plaintiff’s claims lack “well-pled, nonconclusory factual allegation[s]” they fail to state a claim and must be
 23 dismissed. *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 555.

24 Moreover, Plaintiff’s fraud claims (first, second, third, and fourth causes
 25 of action) also fail to state a claim because they do not “state with particularity
 26 the circumstances constituting fraud.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 9(b); *see Vess v. Ciba-*
 27 *Geigy Corps. USA*, 317 F.3d 1097, 1106-07 (9th Cir. 2003) (stating that a

1 plaintiff must include “the who, what, where, when and how” of the
 2 fraud). Where the fraud claim is against a corporation, the plaintiff’s burden is
 3 “even greater.” *Lazar v. Superior Court*, 12 Cal. 4th 631, 645
 4 (1996). Additionally, “Where multiple defendants are asked to respond to
 5 allegations of fraud, the complaint must inform each defendant of his alleged
 6 participation in the fraud.” *Castaneda v. Saxon Mortgage Services, Inc.*, No.
 7 CIV. 2:09-01124 WBS DAD, 2009 WL 4640673 at *6 (E.D. Cal., Dec.3,
 8 2009). Plaintiff’s complaint fails to meet this standard. It lumps Defendants’
 9 names together, makes vague and conclusory statements regarding alleged
 10 fraudulent conduct, and fails to include any allegations specific to the “the
 11 who, what, where, when and how” of the alleged fraud. It is unclear what any
 12 Defendant did that allegedly defrauded Plaintiff. Defendants cannot be
 13 expected to defend themselves based on such inadequate notice of what they
 14 are alleged to have done. *See Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 678-80.

15 Similarly, Plaintiff does not allege facts that demonstrate that any of the
 16 Non-Helmsman Defendants engaged in “extreme and outrageous conduct”
 17 which is a required element of her infliction of emotional distress causes of
 18 action. *KOVR-TV, Inc. v. Superior Court* , 31 Cal. App. 4th 1023, 1028
 19 (1995). The alleged conduct “must be so extreme as to exceed all bounds of
 20 that usually tolerated in a civilized community. . . [and] will be found to be
 21 actionable where the ‘recitation of the facts to an average member of the
 22 community would arouse his resentment against the actor, and lead him to
 23 exclaim, “Outrageous!”” *Id.* at 1028 (citations omitted). Plaintiff’s allegations
 24 that Defendants engaged in actions to impede, lower or eliminate her benefits,
 25 despite supposed promises not to do so fall far short this requirement. *See*
 26 *Cochran v. Cochran*, 65 Cal. App. 4th 488, 494-97 (1998) (sustaining without
 27 leave to amend a demurrer for intentional infliction of emotional distress). As
 28 stated by the *Cochran* court:

1 In evaluating whether the defendant's conduct was
 2 outrageous, it is "not . . . enough that the defendant has
 3 acted with an intent which is tortious or even criminal, or
 4 that he has intended to inflict emotional distress, or even
 5 that his conduct has been characterized by 'malice,' or a
 6 degree of aggravation which would entitle the plaintiff to
 7 punitive damages for another tort. Liability has been found
 8 only where the conduct has been so outrageous in
 9 character, and so extreme in degree, as to go beyond all
 10 possible bounds of decency, and to be regarded as
 11 atrocious, and utterly intolerable in a civilized
 12 community."

13 *Id.* at 496 (quoting Rest.2d Torts, § 46, com. d, p. 73).

14 Thus, there is a long line of cases holding that misrepresentations,
 15 threats, terminating employment in a despicable manner and similar offensive
 16 behavior is insufficient as a matter of law to state a claim for tortious infliction
 17 of emotional distress. *See id.* (collecting cases). Here Defendants' supposed
 18 acts of falsely representing that Plaintiff would receive continued ERISA and
 19 workers' compensation benefits and then engaging in supposed
 20 misrepresentations and other actions to impede, challenge and take away those
 21 benefits is insufficient as a matter of law to state a claim.

16 D. **Plaintiff's Complaint is Inherently Vague and Ambiguous.**

17 Each of Plaintiffs' claims is inherently vague and ambiguous in that it
 18 cannot be determined what particular factual allegations support which claim
 19 against which defendant. Indeed several defendants (AT&T Inc., FMR LLC,
 20 Sedgwick Claims Management Services, and Aon Hewitt Benefit Payment
 21 Services, LLC) are never mentioned in the factual allegations of the complaint
 22 at all. *See* Complaint, ¶¶ 11-31. Nevertheless, Plaintiff is asserting each of
 23 her claims against all defendants. *Id.* at ¶¶ 32-60. This sort of combination
 24 and confusing pleading is precisely what the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure
 25 are designed to prevent. *See* Fed. R. Civ. Proc. 10; *Ramirez v. Alameda*, No.
 26 C12-4852 MEJ, 2013 WL 5934700, at *4-5 (N.D. Cal. Oct. 31, 2013)
 27 (granting motion for more definite statement where allegations in complaint
 28)

1 did not specify which named defendant (if any) committed alleged wrongs).
2 In order to prevent confusion and to allow the parties to quickly and easily
3 refer to the individual claims without unnecessary clarification, if the
4 Complaint is not dismissed in its entirety, this Court should require Plaintiff to
5 identify the factual basis as to her claims with respect to each defendant
6 specifically, so that it may have sufficient opportunity to defend itself against
7 each of Plaintiff's claims without prejudice.

8 **V. Conclusion.**

9 For the foregoing reasons, Plaintiff's Complaint fails to state a claim,
10 and any claim she is trying to make is barred by state and federal statutes and
11 preemption. As a result, Plaintiff's complaint must be dismissed.

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1 To the extent that Plaintiffs' claims are preempted by ERISA or
2 workers' compensation preemption, these claims should be dismissed with
3 prejudice.³

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5 Dated: October 27, 2015

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11 By /s/ Paula M. Weber
12 Paula M. Weber

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3 Should the Court determine that only ERISA preemption or Workers'
25 compensation preemption apply, but not both, and does not dismiss the
26 Complaint on other grounds set forth herein, movants request that the court
27 strike the factual allegations relating to either ERISA benefits (Compl. at
28 4:9-11; 4:13-18; 4:23-24; 5:4-7; 5:10-16) or workers' compensation (Compl.
at 4:12; 4:16-18; 4:25; 5:8-9) pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(f).